<u>REMARKS</u>

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17, 19, 20, 22-33, 35, 36, and 38-48 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 9, 17, 20, 33, and 36 being the independent claims. Claims 2, 10, 18, 21, 34, and 37 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 1, 9, 17, 20, 33, and 37 have been amended. Applicant submits that support for these amendments can be found in the original disclosure, and therefore no new matter has been added.

Claims 1-48 have been rejected under 35.U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,832,186 (<u>Kawana</u>). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the reasons discussed below.

As recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention includes, *inter alia*, the feature of input means for superposing a digital signal string related to multilevel image data and a digital signal string based on additional data, wherein the input means executes one of an AND operation and an OR operation of the two strings. Independent Claim 9 is a method claim reciting a similar feature. With this feature, since either an AND operation or an OR operation is executed for the two digital signal strings, each image forming element will be either ON or OFF (i.e., in either of two distinct states) and the additional data will be reflected in a formed image with certainty.

Applicant submits that the cited art does not disclose or suggest at least the above-mentioned feature of Claims 1 and 9. <u>Kawana</u> discloses adding additional data to multilevel image data by adding a density value to the density value of the multilevel image

data. That patent does not disclose or suggest executing one of an AND operation and an OR operation of a digital signal string related to multilevel image data and a digital signal string based on additional data. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the technique of Kawana cannot ensure that the additional data is reflected in a formed image with the degree of certainty obtained by the present invention recited in Claims 1 and 9.

As recited in independent Claim 17, the present invention includes, among others, the feature wherein driving means has an input terminal for forcedly controlling light emission of an image forming element, and wherein the input terminal forcedly turns on or off light emission of the image forming element. Claim 33 is a method claim that recites a similar feature. With this feature, additional data may be reflected in a formed image with certainty because the input terminal forcedly turns on or off light emission of an image forming element.

Applicant submits that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-mentioned feature. As discussed above, Kawana adds a density value to a density value of multilevel image data. That patent does not disclose or suggest any input terminal that forcedly turns on or off light emission of an image forming element.

As recited in independent Claim 20, the present invention includes, *inter alia*, the feature of input means for superposing a digital signal string related to multilevel image data and a digital signal string based on additional data, wherein the input means executes an exclusive-OR operation of the two strings. Independent Claim 36 is a method claim that recites a similar feature. With this feature an image forming element will be either ON or OFF since an exclusive-OR operation is performed, and therefore additional data can be

reflected in a formed image with certainty. For reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1, the cited art fails to disclose or suggest at least this feature.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the present invention recited in independent Claims 1, 9, 17, 20, 33, and 36 is patentable over the art of record. The dependent claims are believed patentable for at least the same reasons as the respective independent claims, as well as for the additional features they recite.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the above-mentioned Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

Attorney for Applicant
Brian L. Klock
Registration No. 36,570

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200
BLK/lmj